

# ALLIANCE EMPLOYMENT BUREAU

107 East 17th Street

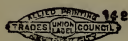
New York City

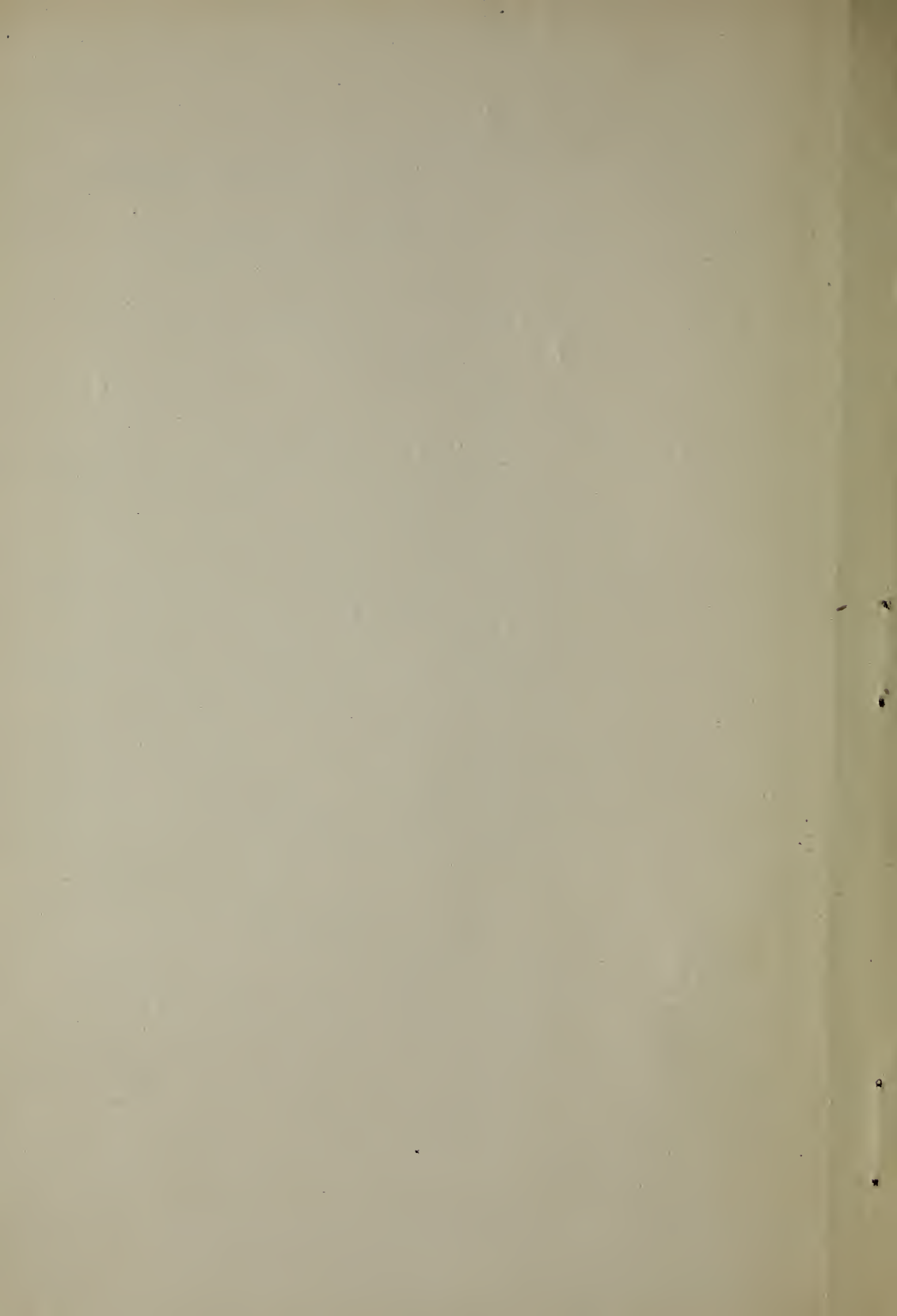
AFFILIATED WITH SETTLEMENTS AND  
OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Inquiries into Trades for  
Factory Workers

Sample Mounting and  
Sample Case Making  
Perfumery Trade  
Paper Box Making  
Candy Trade  
Case Making for  
Jewelry and Silverware

These Inquiries were made for the purpose of learning if it was desirable for the Alliance Employment Bureau to place girls and women in these five branches of factory work. They are in no sense scientific investigations.





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## SAMPLE MOUNTING AND SAMPLE CASE MAKING.

Visits to forty-five workrooms; interviews with a number of girls. **Sources of Information**

Sample Mounting is the placing on cards or in books samples of dry goods, trimmings, ribbons, etc. These cards or books are sent by the wholesalers to thousands of retailers throughout the country. **Definition**

Sample Casemaking is the covering of cardboard with paper, usually black; this paper often has a surface which is an imitation of leather. It is put on with glue. The cases are made by both men and women. The gilt lettering on the covering is done by a stamping machine. The girls usually lay on the gold leaf and boys and men run the stamping machine. Salesmen carry these cases on their trips.

I. Cutting. This is always done by men, who use a heavy long machine knife to cut the goods into long strips and then into pieces of the desired size. **Processes**

II. Trimming. This is cutting off the loose threads on the edges of the samples.

III. Mounting. The glue is spread out very thin on a table or a marble slab and the samples are laid on and taken off with great care. The thumb and the first finger are used in this process.

IV. Labeling. Sometimes the samples themselves are labeled with a number or with the name of a color. Often the samples are placed on a specially prepared card which has already been labeled to correspond with the different colors to be placed on it. The samples are usually given to the girl in the required order and the labels also so that no special intelligence is required in either mounting or labeling. In some houses the number is printed directly

on the sample, however. Then if a sample is wrongly mounted, no harm is done, as goods are ordered by numbers.

V. Eyeletting. This is done by an eyeletting machine, sometimes run by girls and sometimes by men. It is not heavy work nor is the machine dangerous. Each sample card has two eyelets and a number of these cards are laced together to form a book.

VI. Clamping. Sometimes a very simple device, called a clumper, is used for holding a number of cards together, and this is forced through the cards by a small machine.

In all these branches the workers are girls except in the casemaking, cutting and eyeletting as stated above.

#### Work-rooms

The business of sample mounting is carried on in two kinds of workrooms.

I. Large wholesale houses dealing in only a few lines of goods usually have their own workrooms where sample mounting is done. The majority of the woolen goods houses, for example, do their own mounting, as do also the dealers in velvets, silks, laces, etc.

These firms seldom make their own cases, but import them or have them made by the sample mounting houses. This is because casemaking requires skilled workers and this kind of sample mounting does not.

The workrooms in these houses are, as a rule, far superior to those in the regular sample mounting houses. They are usually large, light and very well ventilated. The space for the workers is adequate and the rooms are kept clean.

II. Regular sample mounting houses. These houses make cases and cut trimmings and mount samples for wholesale houses.

Below Canal Street, in the wholesale dry goods district, most of the workrooms are in old buildings where there are no elevators and where often there seems to be no adequate provision for escape in case



of fire. The girls are usually near the windows at the front and rear, but the streets are narrow and there is often very little space between the buildings at the rear; so that the light in the various workrooms ranges from fair to poor. The ventilation is accordingly not very good and there are few attempts at artificial ventilation. These workrooms of the old type are large and space is not so valuable as in the workrooms further uptown so that the workers are not crowded. To the casual observer many of the workrooms seem dirty, but one realizes that the litter is caused by trimming the samples, and it is "clean dirt". Many workrooms are swept every night and there is seldom any dust.

The workrooms above Canal Street, are usually in new or remodeled buildings and are better as to ventilation, lighting, etc.

In the busy seasons young girls are taken on at from \$3 to \$4.50 a week and put at the simplest kind of mounting. They may have an opportunity to become mounters or labelers. In fact many girls do both and the girl who develops into an "all round worker" reaches the maximum wage soon and is expected to fit in anywhere.

**Apprenticeship**

In the wholesale houses wages range from \$5 to \$8 per week, the average being \$7.

**Wages**

In the better grade of sample mounting houses the wages are the same as in the wholesale houses although a few firms pay a maximum of \$10 to \$10.50.

At casemaking the wages range from \$6 to \$8 a week on week work, and from \$12 to \$14 a week when paid by the piece. Only very expert and careful girls can be placed upon piece work and the wages are consequently higher.

The hours in the wholesale houses are short, ranging from 47 to 54 hours a week, and when there is overtime it seldom exceeds the 60 hour limit. The girls usually have the benefit of the half holiday in summer, although one of the best houses keeps its girls until 5:30 the year round. Many

**Hours and Overtime**

wholesale houses give one or two weeks' vacation with pay and make no deduction for absence caused by illness. Consequently these firms often secure a better grade girl than is found in the sample mounting houses.

In the sample mounting houses the hours are much longer than in the wholesale houses and there is a great deal of night work, often enough to make a total of 65 hours a week in the busy season.

#### Seasons

Many wholesale houses keep their employees throughout the year. Dealers in woolen goods, however, seem to have two pretty well defined seasons, which are at their height in October and March. At these times they greatly increase their force of workers. With most regular sample mounting houses the dull season is from May to August, varying in different houses. The force of workers is considerably reduced then, for instance from 23 to 10; from 18 to 10.

#### Homework

In a few sample mounting houses girls are permitted to take home some of the simplest work and can make 60 cents to 75 cents an evening. It is probable that the family help in this work.

#### Requirements

The chief requirement seems to be the ability to use glue in such a way as not to ruin the samples and cases. To do this a girl must have a steady hand and keep her mind on her work.

#### Summary

While the conditions are somewhat better in the workrooms in wholesale houses, there is more variety and interest in the work done by sample mounting houses. Girls go from cotton goods to trimmings, from velvets to silks; they also learn different ways of mounting samples and get some ideas as to colors and shades, forms, etc. Girls can learn in the lower grade sample mounting houses the handling of materials and can acquire speed; they can then go from these houses to those of higher grade. (This is good in theory but we have not so far found that girls do it.) The work in the lower grade houses is so irregular that between

seasons the girls go to other kinds of unskilled work (for this grade of work can hardly be called skilled) and often do not return to sample mounting. The work does not require a very high degree of intelligence and there seems to be nothing unhealthy about it. Some firms use a kind of glue which has an unpleasant odor, but we have not learned that the health is affected by this odor. The girls usually sit on chairs or high stools.

The trade is recommended for girls of average intelligence or even for those below the average. **Recommendation**

## THE PERFUMERY TRADE.

### Sources of Information

Visits to sixty-one firms listed under manufacturers of perfumery and toilet preparations. It proved necessary to eliminate a number of these firms before we began our inquiry. Some represented importers; some had only offices and sales-rooms of out of town factories; some had gone out of business; one firm dealt in essential oils from which perfumes are made; one made extracts and flavoring; some made proprietary lotions, tonics, powders etc., and imported their perfumes and two made toilet powders only.

There remained twenty-eight firms upon which to base our inquiry. Of these only eighteen allowed us to enter their workrooms.

### Kinds of Work

For women the work consists in labeling, capping, ribboning, wrapping and packing. It is very simple work, demanding only neatness, deftness of fingers and speed. Women also do demonstrating which is, however, not a part of the trade. For boys the work is filling tins with powder and covering the same. Boys also work in the shipping room.

### Processes

I. Labeling. This is pasting the printed marker on the bottle to show the maker and the kind of perfume. Workers begin on tiny bottles distributed as advertising samples or larger bottles called "dummies" and used in displays. They are advanced to the better grades of goods as they develop speed. Importers employ labelers to repair damages to original packages and to re-label display stock.

II. Capping. This is covering the bottle stopper with tissue or kid. The covering is dampened, drawn firmly and smoothly over the top and tied neatly with cord or ribbon. All edges are



clipped evenly with sharp scissors so that each knot and bow looks just like the model. Only deft fingers can do this quickly and well.

Small bottles are fitted into wooden blocks which hold them in position, leaving both hands free for work. Larger bottles are held in racks or trays.

III. Ribboning and Wrapping. Ribboning is ornamenting the bottles with fancy bows. The ribboner may also do fancy wrapping and sealing, with individual wrapper and seals, and decorating boxes and other holders with bands and bows for displays. The expert ribboner is the best paid worker among the girls.

IV. Packing. Girls pack the bottles in cartons, containing 3, 6 or 12 bottles. These cartons are stored in the shipping room, where the heavier packing is done by men.

V. Demonstrating. Aside from the above work for girls this trade offers work in demonstrating which is usually well paid. Demonstrators usually work in department stores and may be employed all or part of the year, according to their ability and to trade conditions. The displays are usually arranged by men though it seems as if a girl's taste might fit her to do this work well also.

Firms in this trade are not confined to any one section of the city. A few were in dingy old buildings, one on the lower West Side being on the upper floor of a rear house, once a tenement, and another, on the East Side over an Italian restaurant. Several of the best places occupy three or more lofts or an entire building. The showrooms and offices were uniformly good, some exceedingly attractive. Most of the workrooms were clean, light and well ventilated, but a few were lighted by gas at all hours.

Work-  
rooms

The men and boys work in a different loft (or in another part of the same loft) from the girls.

There is no dangerous machinery, dust, nor poisonous substance to be handled in the perfumery department, but in the powder rooms there is more or less dust. In the best places covered chutes and

automatic fillers are used to minimize this. Girls who "clean off" and "top" boxes usually wear caps and aprons which may or may not be furnished by the company.

Sometimes a worker is nauseated by the odor of perfumes but very few are so affected as to need to give up the work and in a few days most workers are quite accustomed to it.

### Apprenticeship

Boys. A boy who wishes to enter the trade and work up must do so by way of the office or shipping room. He may go in as errand boy and, if he then gets into the shipping room, it is possible for him by studying chemistry in the evening to get eventually into the laboratory. He may also become Assistant Superintendent and finally Superintendent. If he enters the powder room he wastes his time, for the work is unskilled and leads nowhere.

Girls. A girl begins by labelling the cheapest goods, then the better grades, learning to cap and ribbon, if neat and quick enough. All firms take learners. They are usually taken on during the dull season when they are shown how and gradually speeded up to the requirements of the busy season.

### Wages

Not many boys enter the trade to stay except in the office or in the shipping room. In the powder room they earn from \$5 to \$6 a week; as errand boys or office boys they start at \$4 or \$5; in the shipping room, at \$6.

Female apprentices start at \$3.50 or \$4.50 usually \$4. To reach the average wage of \$6 or \$7 requires at least two seasons; to reach the maximum as given below depends upon the worker.

Labellers and cappers receive \$5 to \$9 a week; ribboners, \$8 to \$14; demonstrators, \$10 to \$18. These last receive salary and commission.

Workers are paid double rates usually for overtime. Some places pay fifty cents an evening, others, twenty-five cents for supper and only regular rates per hour. Workers are raised fifty cents a week

once or twice a year; a few firms advance more rapidly according to individual work.

The day is usually  $9\frac{1}{2}$  hours long. Total number of hours for the week is 51 to 54 hours. Saturday all year is from one to four hours shorter than other days. No firm was found to have Sunday work.

**Hours  
and  
Overtime**

There is more or less overtime from November to Christmas. Work is prolonged one to three hours for two to four nights per week. Overtime is said not to be compulsory, but this statement can seldom be depended upon.

The busy season begins in July or August and lasts until Christmas. Firms making creams, powders and perfumes and handling soaps have a "soap and powder season" from January to July and perfumery season from July to Christmas. A firm of this kind is busy all the year, the girls working in both lines.

**Seasons**

One firm which specializes on hair tonic and imports perfumes has its busy season from January to July. Other firms keep only their oldest and best workers during the dull season while some work five days each week at this season in order to keep their workers. One firm gives vacations in the dull season paying each older worker for two weeks and workers of over a year for one week.

There is no team work.

**Team Work**

This trade is not unionized. One forewoman said that the work is too unskilled to be unionized as any employer can get new workers at any time.

**Unions**

The workers in perfumery are largely native Americans, German Americans and Irish Americans. No lines are drawn to exclude any nationality, but it is found that few Jewish workers are in the trade.

**Nationality**

No home work was reported by any firm.

**Homework**

The work is simple, it is learned easily and is light and clean. Workers may sit or stand, which is an advantage over standing all the time.

**Summary**

Hours of work are good on the whole even with

overtime in the busy season. Workers are of good average type and the work is fairly steady. Girls were found who had been in the trade from six to twelve years.

**Recom-  
mendation**

Work in this trade where conditions are good is recommended for a certain type of girl,—the one who is not mentally equipped for more ambitious work and who is neat and quick. It is not a good trade for a boy, “unless”, as one superintendent said, “he has education and ambition enough to do laboratory work, when his advance is limited only by his knowledge of chemistry”. Work in the powder rooms cannot be recommended because of the dust and because there is no real future for the boy.



## PAPER BOX MAKING.

Visits to fifty-four workrooms. Interviews with twenty-three girls. The inquiry covered places where all kinds and sizes of pasteboard boxes are made, including the ordinary run of boxes, cigarette boxes, hat boxes, both round and square, suit boxes and cartons. While these last are made in so-called paper-box factories the machinery and processes are not the same as those in the ordinary factories.

Sources of  
Information

I. Scoring. This is the making of deep indentations along the sides of each sheet of rough cardboard, in order to mark off the sides and ends of the box. This is done by a machine run by boys or men.

Processes

There is a double scoring machine in use in some factories by which all the scoring on each sheet is done in one process.

II. Cornering. This is the cutting out of square pieces from the corners of each sheet of the rough cardboard so that the box may be "set up". Several sheets are cornered at one time. These machines are not dangerous, but are run by boys and men, mainly because of the weight of the number of sheets handled at one time.

III. Staying or "setting up". This consists in folding a side and an end together and running a piece of paper along the two edges to hold them together and to straighten the corner thus formed. The machine which does this is the only really dangerous machine in the trade and is run by men, boys or girls. In the East Side factories men or boys run it almost invariably; on the West Side it is usually run by girls. The operator sits on a low stool.

IV. Stripping. This consists in covering the sides of the box and cover with paper. The box or

cover is placed on a wooden block the size and shape of the box and is turned around as a gummed strip of paper is fed out by the stripping machine. This strip is guided by the operator who presses it down firmly. The paper extends about a half inch beyond the sides of the box at the top and bottom. When she has gone nearly around the box she brings down a knife which cuts the strip; the latter is then fastened at a corner. The covers of boxes sometimes have an additional strip of gilt around them. In this case the two strips are carried around together. The knife used can be worked by the foot, but the stripper usually throws it down with her hand and then lifts it to have it ready for the next time. The stripping machine is very simple and cannot be considered dangerous. It is always run by girls who sit at their work.

V. Turning-in. Each stripper has a "turner-in", who sits at the same table and who presses down the half-inch extension at the edges of the box. The turner-in carries the boxes from the setter-up to the stripper and from the stripper to the top labeller. Thus the stripper and turner-in form a "team" and work together. All turners-in are girls and they sit at their work.

VI. Top-labeling. This is putting paper on the top of the cover and, when required, on the bottom of the box. The cover is laid on a block and a gummed strip is brought down upon it by a machine (usually worked by foot power) while the top-labeller presses it down. This machine is run by girls and is not dangerous. The girls must stand.

VII. Finishing. This is hand work and consists in putting lace paper around the inside edges of the fancy boxes, inserting tapes, strips of paper for covering contents of box when filled, etc. The older women are usually found at the finishing table.

VIII. Labeling. This is putting on the end of each box a label containing either the name of the manufacturer, his trademark or the name of the goods the box is to hold. Done by girls.

IX. Closing. This is simply putting the covers on the boxes, after which they are tied up in dozen or other lots ready for shipment. Both boys and girls do this.

The covers of some small boxes have a small semi-circular piece cut out of each of the sides (boxes for spool thread, for example) for convenience in opening the boxes. This is done by the "thumber", a very simple machine operated by either boys or girls.

These are the various processes in the making of the ordinary paper box. In making some of the very large boxes the stripping and top-labeling are done entirely by hand and the women who do it are called "table hands". They stand all day at a table and glue their own strips. This is the method used in the making of suit boxes and round hat boxes.

Cartons for holding salt, chloride of lime etc., **Cartons** are made by entirely different processes and the factories in which they are made are not really paper-box factories, although sometimes so-called. We were unable to get into any of these workrooms. Cartons for holding cream are made by another method. So far as can be ascertained these last are made under a special patent and at only one place in New York City. The men run the machine and unskilled girls do what little hand work there is. The girls are paid by the piece and are said to make \$1.25 a day.

Most of the paper-box factories are below 14th **Work-** Street, both on the east and west sides of the city. **rooms** The trade has certain centres of location, if one may use the term. A number of factories are located below 14th Street on the West Side, Elizabeth Street and Mulberry Street form other centres. In one building were four factories, in another three, and so on.

The buildings in which paper-box factories are located range from the very worst to the very best.



In the building referred to above, where four factories were found, the stairs and halls were narrow, dark and dirty and all but one of the workrooms were dirty. On the other hand a number of factories are to be found in up-to-date buildings.

#### Apprenticeship

The turner-in is the apprentice in this trade, although sometimes the new worker is put at labeling or closing. She expects to become a stripper, although she may become a top labeller. There are no successive steps in this trade, as in some others, and strippers seldom become top-labellers or finishers.

In many factories of the middle and lower grades we were told that no girls under sixteen years of age were taken, but when questioned further the employer admitted that he did take them if they had their "working papers" and "of course" they worked the same hours as the older women. In the best factories no girls under sixteen are employed.

#### Wages

The turner-in starts at \$3 to \$4.50, usually the latter. One place which paid only \$2 was found and in one factory learners give one week's time.

Strippers earn from \$6 to \$9, occasionally even \$10.

Top labellers and bottom labellers earn from \$8 to \$11 a week.

Finishers and "table hands" earn \$10 to \$11.

#### Hours and Overtime

Except during the busy season the hours in paper box factories are exceptionally good. The total hours ranged from  $50\frac{1}{2}$  (in one place) to  $56\frac{1}{2}$  (in one place), the usual number of hours being 55 or 56. The half holiday in summer is given without exception but in many places girls come in  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour earlier or leave  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour later than during the remaining months of the year. Where this is not done  $\frac{1}{2}$  day's wages is usually deducted although one man said that his workers were so independent that he must pay them for the half day or he would lose them. In a few places the half day is given outright, although the piece workers, of course, lose the time.



The busy seasons are from January to March, **Seasons** and from September to November. During these months there is considerable overtime in many of the factories, but very often the total number of hours per week comes well within the number allowed by law. In other cases the girls (including those under 16) work 63 to 68 hours. We found one factory where, in the busy season, the girls worked 7 days and 5 evenings from September to November.

A great deal of work is given out. Cigarette **Homework** boxes and small novelty boxes (for pins, buttons, etc.), are covered in the homes. We are told that the same prices are paid as for similar work done in the factory, but have no way of testing this statement.

In the factories where cigarette boxes are made **Team Work** the covering is done by hand, by teams of three usually, a man and two girls. The man is the captain of the team and receives piece-work wages from which he pays the girls.

On the East Side many Jewish girls were found **Nationality of Workers** and some Italians; on the West Side, Italian, Jewish and Irish girls. The type ranged from very low to high grade girls. Factories were found where men working in the same room with girls smoked cigarettes while they worked and in other factories the men and women were kept entirely separate. Often they were in different parts of the same large loft.

Some workrooms where the girls are Jewish are closed on Saturday and open on Sunday.

As has been said before, the only dangerous machine in this trade is the setting-up or staying machine, which, as stated above, is usually run on the East Side by men and boys, on the West Side, by girls. There are two kinds of safeguards furnished for this machine. One kind is fastened on the machine, but can be and generally is removed; the other consists of a pair of steel fingers which the operator wears or more often does not wear. **Safeguards** The

attitude of many of the firms is, "We furnish the safeguards; if the girls don't use them it is their own fault", but they are not upheld in this attitude by the law which makes the use of the safeguards imperative. We found only one employer who insisted on the use of the guards. The crushing of a girl's finger by the setting-up machine is a common occurrence. It is true that this is caused by the operator's own carelessness for the men, who never use the guards, seldom meet with accidents. Still, girls are careless and the guards should be used. The girls object to using the guards, just why we could not find out, as we could not see that their use "lessened the output", the usual reason given.

#### Summary

Girls starting at \$4 to \$4.50 can reach a maximum of \$10 to \$11 in 1½ to 2 years. The normal hours are good and in busy season the overtime is not, as a rule, excessive. There are many girls of good grade found in the trade, and, judging from the very few applications from paper-box makers received at the Bureau, the girls stick to the trade. The tendency is to work overtime rather than to engage extra workers in the busy season. This implies fairly steady work.

#### Recommendation

The placing of girls at paper-box making is recommended for the reasons given in the summary.

## CANDY TRADE.

Visits to twenty-two factories and talks with sixty-eight girls. We were admitted to only ten workrooms. **Sources of Information**

I. Making the Candy. Candy is known as hard candy and chocolates and bonbons. The candy is made by men only. **Processes**

### II. Dipping.

1. Machine Dipping. The dipping machine is run by men, but girls place on the machines the trays of candy to be dipped. These trays are dipped in a vat of chocolate and the girls then take them off and put them into cold storage.

2. Hand Dipping. Hand dippers of chocolate and bonbons sit at long tables, each before a marble bowl set in a marble slab, much like a stationary wash bowl. This bowl is filled with chocolate or cream as the case may be. The chocolate dippers put into the bowl with the naked hand each candy to be covered and simply turn it over until it is covered, sometimes finishing the process by marking a cross or other figure on the top with the finger nail. Bonbon dippers use a fork or ladle on which the bonbon is laid. It is stirred around in the cream until covered. The candy is then placed on oiled paper on trays which are put into cold storage. Chocolates and bonbons are kept in storage for weeks, perhaps months. All fine chocolates are dipped by hand and the girls become very expert at this work. The dippers are the expert workers of the candy trade and make good wages, as we shall see later on.

III. Wrapping and Packing are processes that need little description. When girls are packing chocolates of several flavors and varieties they walk around a long table on which are the various



candies and fill their boxes as they walk. One firm puts up a box of one hundred and one chocolates, no two alike. No special skill is required in this branch of the work, but the girls who do up the packages and tie them with cord or ribbon are, it seems to the onlooker, very skillful indeed.

#### **Work-rooms**

Candy factories range in size from whole buildings where hundreds of girls are employed to single rooms in old buildings where sometimes only four or five girls are at work. In the larger factories the men and women usually work in separate rooms, sometimes even on separate floors, while in the smallest factories the men and girls work together perforce.

All but one of the workrooms visited were clean and this corresponds to statements made in nearly every case by the girls interviewed. In some of the small candy factories the girls clean their own tables by scrubbing them, while in the larger factories the rough cleaning is done by scrub women. The workrooms are light, but poorly ventilated usually, because the workers refuse to have the windows opened. Space is adequate, except in the busy seasons, when it is quite probable that the workers are greatly crowded, especially at the packing tables.

#### **The Coldroom**

Chocolates are usually dipped in what is known as "the cold room" and there has been at various times considerable discussion as to whether or not it was necessary to keep down the temperature of the dipping-room. Of course, in summer any room at summer heat would be too warm for the dipping and in most factories the dipping room is then cooled by artificial means. No employer will admit that the temperature ever falls below sixty-eight, but it was noticed that in most factories the girls in the dipping room wore their wraps. The girls almost invariably say that the dipping room is cold, but unfortunately most girls seem to like hot, stuffy rooms. However, there seems to be no doubt but that the temperature in most dipping



rooms is not more than fifty-eight or sixty, too cold for girls to sit at work. A French confectioner said that a cold room was unnecessary so long as the chocolates were put into cold storage as soon as dipped. He had been in business more than forty years and said that a cold dipping room was unheard of forty years ago. Some firms have a set of small refrigerators and claim not to have the dipping room ever below sixty-eight.

There is nothing which can be called apprenticeship in a candy factory. In the busy season unskilled girls are taken on as packers or wrappers. Some of these may develop into chocolate dippers, but it is much more likely that the dippers are recruited from among the regular packers and wrappers. Packing is one of the kinds of work into which unskilled girls go for a short time and it very often starts a young girl out on her career as a "floater." Sometimes these girls go back each season to the candy factories, filling in their time between seasons with whatever odd jobs come their way.

**Apprenticeship**

Packers. Receive \$3 to \$5.50, rarely \$6 per week, the usual wages being \$5. Two girls claimed to have earned \$7. For overtime extra pay is given, varying from eight cents an hour to twenty-five cents an evening. Sometimes overtime is paid for at regular rates and occasionally supper is furnished.

**Wages**

Wrappers receive \$5 and \$6 per week.

Dippers are sometimes paid by the week, but oftener are on piece work. When paid by the week they get \$7 to \$10; at piece work they sometimes earn as much as \$11 and average \$9.50 to \$10.

The normal hours are usually much less than sixty, the lowest being forty-eight, in one case only. The average is fifty-four or fifty-five hours. In the busy season girls in some factories work seventy-six or seventy-seven hours a week. In one factory where conditions are so good that customers

**Hours and Overtime**

are invited to visit it the hours just before Christmas were from sixty-eight to seventy-three a week.

In some places the girls of the best type are sometimes transferred to the salesrooms, but not all of the girls consider this a promotion, as sometimes the girls work seventy-nine and one-half hours as salesclerks and one firm has been known to send salesclerks home at two A. M. These girls not only sell goods but pack some of the fancy boxes at the salesroom.

**Seasons**

The busy season is from September to Christmas. During these months a large extra force of workers is taken on, mostly for packing. At Christmas all these are laid off. Just before Easter and again before Fourth of July are other "rush" seasons but not so many extra workers are needed at this time. It is possible for an "extra" girl to get perhaps five months' work in the year.

**Summary**

The dipper is the expert worker in the trade, but very few of the packers and wrappers ever qualify as dippers. The time for placing a girl is in the busy season when she works long hours for poor pay and is then turned off at the two seasons of the year when it is hardest to find work. Just after Christmas is perhaps the dulllest time in the year and just after Easter the spring season, except in certain skilled trades, is past its height.

**Recommendation**

The placing of girls in candy factories cannot be recommended. Whenever possible, they should be urged not to take this work and the above reasons should be given them.

## CASE MAKING FOR JEWELRY AND SILVERWARE.

Visits to sixty-six firms listed under manufacturers of jewelry cases and fancy boxes.

**Sources of Information**

A number of these firms were engaged in making gold cases for watches and wooden cases; some had only their offices here in New York and some had removed or gone out of business. Eliminating all firms not dealing in jewelry and silverware cases, there remain forty-five firms upon which to base our inquiry. Thirty workrooms were visited.

I. Casemaking. Wooden cases are made by cabinet workers who are all men and experienced workers.

**Processes**

The various machines are extremely dangerous, especially the circular saws, and the moulding and sand papering machines. "Workers must just be careful, as the machines are not provided with safeguards." One employer said that there is not a man in this work who has not a scar or a maimed finger or two. Another said that because of the unguarded machinery and the many accidents therefrom he would not advise a boy to enter this branch of the business.

In addition to the danger from machinery the workroom atmosphere is filled with sawdust. A blowpipe is used to remove dust at the sandpapering machines but not elsewhere. Employers say that sawdust is not injurious and point to workmen who have been working in it for more than twenty years.

II. Matching up. This is fitting the top and the bottom of the case together and adjusting the hinges and the fastening to insure the case closing properly. Holes for the fastenings are burned



through the wood with an iron or steel tool. When fitted perfectly the fastening and hinges are removed and laid aside until the case is covered.

III. Covering. Cheaper grade covers are cut in quantity by a cutting machine run by a man. Leather is cut with a knife, and the edges are pared thin with a paring knife on a lithographer's stone. The leather must be slightly dampened before applying it as a cover. Paste is applied only upon the edges and the whole fitted to the case smoothly and evenly. Persons having moist hands cannot work on leather as the more delicately tinted covers would be ruined and even dark ones would be disfigured by the moisture. The finer cases are made by men while girls are allowed to do only the cheaper grade cases, chiefly for silverware. These are covered with moreen and leatherette or imitation leather.

When covered the case is put under a weight to stand until dry.

IV. Blocking. This is covering a form of heavy paper or cardboard to fit the bottom and the top of the case. The one for the top is usually covered with pleatings or puffings of the lining. If left plain a padding of cotton is used as interlining. The one for the bottom may have a padding of cotton, corrugated cardboard or blocks of wood glued upon it. These blocks of wood are shaped to fit the article to be placed in the case. The lining material—cotton, brocade, silk, satin or velvet—is laid over this form and neatly pleated, puffed or pressed into the shaped blocks with a folder or knife. Edges are turned with the folder and pasted to the back.

V. Handtooling or "finishing." This process is found only in the finer leather cases which have the edges and top decorated with hand tooling and gilding. Men who do this are expert workers and well paid.

VI. Hingeing. Hinges and fastening are now put in place to stay. A strap hinge of the lining is



made by covering an interlining strip to fit inside of the back of the case to which the hinge is attached. The opposite end of this when attached to the inside of the cover conceals the metal hinges.

VII. Lining. A strip of cardboard is covered with lining, fitted into the case and glued to the sides. In the trade they term this "border" or "centre." The block for the bottom of the case is now put in place, the strap hinge attached to the cover, the lining of the cover set in and the case is complete.

When cases are made to order the customer's name is usually printed in gilt or color on the lining for the top before it is put into the case.

About one-half of these firms are in Maiden Lane and nearby streets, as this neighborhood is the centre of the jewelry trade. The remainder are found in various parts of the city below Forty-second street. **Work-rooms**

The smaller places downtown are in very dingy old buildings with narrow halls and stairways. Some of them consist of merely one small room divided by a partition into a tiny showroom or office and the workroom. Others occupy one or several lofts, one of the largest having five lofts.

Most of the rooms where girls work are clean, light and well ventilated. Where only men work conditions are not so good.

Some good workrooms had dirty and littered stairs and halls leading to them. Some firms employ both men and women, the men for the carpentry work and the covering with velvet and other heavy material; the women for covering with light weight material and for lining.

In places where cases are made as well as covered the carpentry department is distinct from the lining and covering department, either on a different floor or in a different part of the same loft.

Where both men and women are employed they work on different floors or in different parts of the same floor. Each body of workers has its own head.

A few firms make paper boxes in which to enclose their cases. Where this is done by hand the workers are in a group apart from the casemakers. Where boxes are made by machinery there is a special department for the paper box making.

## Apprenticeship

Boys. If a boy is taken as apprentice at case making he runs errands, cleans up shop, and is "put on the bench" to learn the use of hammer, saw, chisel etc., and to do joining and gluing until he is twenty-one. Not until then is he allowed to go on the machines. At places where covering and lining are done the apprentice runs errands, cleans the shop, learns how to handle the paste and glue, his materials and tools. Gradually he works up to the best grade of work.

Girls. The first step for a girl is to learn how to handle her paste, glue and brush. She puts in the paddings, covers strips for lining, glues forms or blocks into place, covers and lines the cheapest grade cases, then the better ones.

Six firms take no learners and firms that take boys take only one or two a year. No girls under sixteen are taken, but some firms take boys at fifteen.

## Wages

Apprentices start at \$3 or \$4 a week, usually the boys at \$3 and the girls at \$4. If they have been at a trade school they may start at \$5. Some training thus enables a worker to start for more, but employers say it does not follow that such worker will advance any faster than the one who begins in the factory. Some employers prefer to train their own workers in their own way.

To reach the full wage in high grade work requires from two to five years.

Casemakers (men) earn \$12 to \$24. Coverers and liners (boys and men) \$12 to \$25, usually \$15 or \$18. Coverers and liners (girls and women) \$6 to \$9, occasionally \$12 to \$14. Hand toolers or finishers (men) earn \$4 a day and during the busiest time may earn as high as \$35 or \$40 a week. In

most places hand tooling is done outside by men who do this work only.

Workers are usually paid time and a half for overtime. Some firms pay time and a quarter. One pays thirty-five per cent. over regular wages and one gives double pay. Workers are generally raised fifty cents a week once or twice a year until the maximum is reached.

The day is usually nine and one-half hours long though some firms have nine and a few ten hours. Total number of hours for work is fifty-one to fifty-six hours. Saturday in winter is one to four hours shorter than other days and in summer or when very dull workrooms close for Saturday afternoons. The half day is usually made up by an earlier hour for opening or a later one for closing. No firms work on Sunday instead of Saturday. **Hours and Overtime**

The busy season uniformly begins in July or August and lasts until Christmas. Firms making salesmen's cases are busiest in January, February and July. Some firms keep busy all the year by doing stock and repair work; others keep only the oldest and best workers during the dull season, while others work half or three-quarter time. **Seasons**

There is more or less overtime during the busy season. A month or six weeks before Christmas work is prolonged one to three hours, two, three or four evenings a week. In some places where only men are employed they sometimes work every night. In one or two places there is Sunday work for men if it is necessary to fill orders. Places which are "busy all the year" usually close down for repairs for a week or two after Christmas.

Only four firms report home work. It is paid for by the gross. This is the only piece work. Definite price for such work could not be obtained except in one place. A girl who makes velvet-covered ring boxes is paid at the rate of \$9 per gross. Such boxes usually retail at forty cents each. **Homework**

There is no team work in this trade. One **Team-work**



manager said he thought that it would be a good thing, but that it had not been tried.

A case may pass through several hands or be made by one worker.

#### Unions

The trade is not unionized. Some years ago a strike was declared, demanding recognition of the then existing union, better pay for overtime etc., but it failed and rather injured the trade.

Some of the men opened up small places and cut prices and "the trade has been split up ever since."

#### Nationality

Formerly case making was in the hands of Germans or German-Americans, but now "Jewish workers are taking over the trade." Jewish, German-American and Italian workers are found in numbers about in the order named. The type of workers is good.

#### Summary

Women workers of average intelligence may rise to \$12 or \$14 a week in a few years. In the covering and lining branch of the trade there is no dangerous machinery, there are no poisonous substances to be handled, no dust and litter and no noise.

Hours of work are good on the whole, even considering the overtime.

Workers are of good type. Work is fairly steady. Girls generally stay until they marry and some men have been with the same firm twenty or twenty-five years.

Few girls do high grade work. If a girl really wished to do high grade work some employers hold that she could. Some say she has not done it simply because she was not instructed, as no one cares to waste time on a worker who is not in the trade to stay. Still others claim that it is not possible for a girl to handle leather etc., as a man can. Indications are that girls are entering the trade more and more each year.

Employers are almost unanimous in pronouncing this "a good trade for a boy if he will stick to it." Most firms complain of great difficulty in getting the right kind of boys as apprentices, "the kind that



will stick," and prefer boys of any other nationality rather than the native American.

Covering and lining cases is recommended as a good trade for both boys and girls provided, as the Bureau advises in all trades, they work in factories where conditions are found to be good. **Recommendation**

Casemaking, open to boys only, is not recommended because of the dangerous machinery, and dust-laden air of the workroom.

NOTE:—These Inquiries were made before the 54 hour law went into effect and the statements as to overtime must be considered from the point of view of the 60 hour law. The law has been in force for too short a time for trustworthy information as to its workings to be secured but it is known that in several candy factories the law was broken last December. One man in the perfumery business said, "Of course we shall have overtime in our busy season even if it does exceed 54 hours a week." A paper box manufacturer writes, "The better class of firms will keep the law. I can't say about the low grade places". As the Inquiries show, the overtime in sample mounting was usually well within the 60 hour law, so that in this trade we shall probably find the 54 hour law kept. In casemaking the conditions are much the same as in sample mounting. These observations are offered as probabilities, rather than positive statements.

